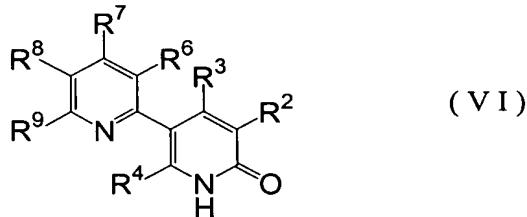


IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

Claim 1 (Currently Amended): A production method of a 5-(2'-pyridyl)-2-pyridone derivative represented by the formula (VI)



wherein

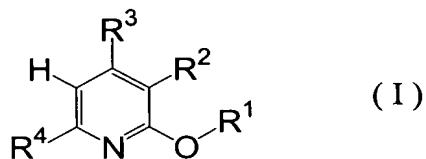
R², R³ and R⁴

are each a hydrogen atom, an alkyl group optionally having substituent(s), an aryl group optionally having substituent(s), an alkoxy alkoxy group optionally having substituent(s) or an aryloxy group optionally having substituent(s), or R² and R³ optionally form, together with a carbon atom bonded thereto, a ring optionally having substituent(s), and

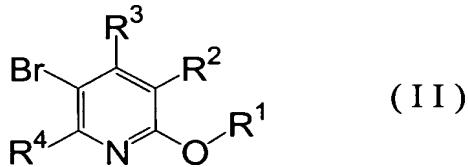
R⁶, R⁷, R⁸ and R⁹

are each a hydrogen atom, an alkyl group optionally having substituent(s) or an aryl group optionally having substituent(s), or R⁶ and R⁷, R⁷ and R⁸, or R⁸ and R⁹ optionally form, together with a carbon atom bonded thereto, a ring optionally having substituent(s),

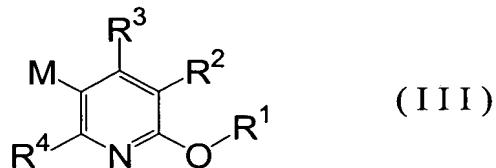
which comprises reacting a pyridine derivative represented by the formula (I)



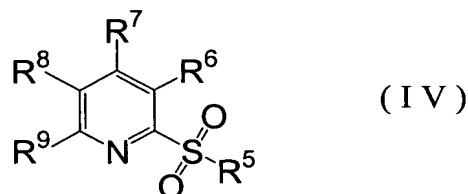
wherein R^1 is an alkyl group optionally having substituent(s) or an aryl group optionally having substituent(s), and R^2 , R^3 and R^4 are as defined above, with a brominating agent to give a 5-bromopyridine derivative represented by the formula (II)



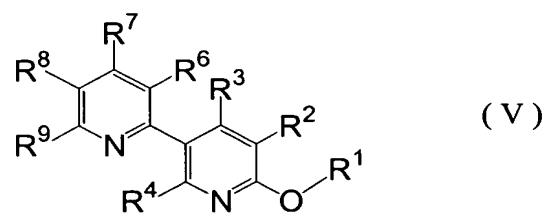
wherein R^1 , R^2 , R^3 and R^4 are as defined above, reacting the obtained 5-bromopyridine derivative (II) with a metallizing agent to give an organometallic compound represented by the formula (III)



wherein M is a metal atom belonging to group 1 or 2 of the periodic table, MgCl, or MgBr and R^1 , R^2 , R^3 and R^4 are as defined above, reacting the obtained organometallic compound (III) with a 2-sulfonylpyridine derivative represented by the formula (IV)



wherein R^5 is an alkyl group optionally having substituent(s) or an aryl group optionally having substituent(s), and R^6 , R^7 , R^8 and R^9 are as defined above, to give a 6-alkoxy-3,2'-bipyridine derivative represented by the formula (V)



wherein R^1 , R^2 , R^3 , R^4 , R^6 , R^7 , R^8 and R^9 are as defined above, and hydrolyzing the obtained 6-alkoxy-3,2'-bipyridine derivative (V).

Claim 2 (Currently Amended): The production method of claim 1, wherein the organometallic compound is a compound of the formula (III) wherein M is a ~~lithium atom or metal atom belonging to group 1~~, a magnesium atom, $MgCl$, or $MgBr$.

Claim 3 (Canceled).

Claim 4 (New): The production method of claim 1, wherein the organometallic compound is a compound of the formula (III) wherein M is a lithium atom, a sodium atom, a magnesium atom, $MgBr$, or $MgCl$.

Claim 5 (New): The production method of claim 1, wherein the organometallic compound is a compound of the formula (III) wherein M is a lithium atom, a magnesium atom, or $MgBr$.